



Jimmy Carter Library & Museum **News Release**

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Anniversary of Cultural Agreement With China Celebrated With Embroidery Exhibit Historic Exchange Document Signed 26 Years Ago

Atlanta, GA. - Twenty-six years ago Monday (January 31), President Jimmy Carter and Chinese Vice Premier Deng Xiaoping signed an historic cultural exchange agreement. The 1979 pact called for the United States and China to “promote wider contacts between the two peoples” and to “encourage a deeper knowledge of their respective histories, cultures, literatures, arts, languages, sports and other areas.”

In honor of that cultural exchange agreement, the Jimmy Carter Presidential Library and Museum will present the only display outside of China of exquisite embroidery by two Grand Masters. The 32 pieces of extraordinary Suzhou embroidery are the work of Grand Master Gu Wenxia and her protégé Grand Master Yu Fuzhen.

Grand Master Gu is the former President of the Suzhou Embroidery Institute and the founder of the Suzhou Embroidery Museum. As the chief designer for the Suzhou Embroidery Institute, she developed the design for the world famous double-sided “Kitten Playing With Mantis” embroidery. The embroidery was presented to President Carter and Mrs. Carter by Vice Premier Deng Xiaoping during his 1979 visit to Washington and is on permanent display at the Carter Presidential Museum.

Suzhou embroidery originated in a region of China known for centuries for its high quality silk production. The use of embroidery to decorate garments goes back over 2,000 years. During the Ming Dynasty, Suzhou became a thriving center for silk industries and handicrafts. Paintings were reproduced by embroiderers. Their works were so detailed and striking that they were referred to as “paintings by needle.” In the years that followed, Suzhou embroidery developed a style of its own.

The exhibition, entitled “Hand to Hand: Two Grand Masters of Suzhou Embroidery” opens February 19th at the Carter Presidential Museum. It includes unforgettable landscapes, animals, portraits and flowers.

There is no additional charge to see this exhibit. Admission to the Presidential Museum is \$7 for adults, \$5 for seniors (60 and over), military and students with ID. Those 16 years old and under are free.

The Carter Presidential Library and Museum is open Monday through Saturday from 9:00 a.m. until 4:45 p.m. and on Sunday from noon until 4:45 p.m.

Editor’s note: Images of Master Gu & Master Yu and their embroideries are available upon request.